

Referees and Objectivity

A/ Discussion:

1. Do you think that a referee can always be objective?
2. Can you think of famous scandals related to the decisions of football referees?
3. What measures can be taken to improve the situation?

5 referee decisions that shook the world

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ybYY-bEqGdY>

B/ Watch the video and comment on the following:

1. Which match are they talking about in the video?
2. What was the controversial issue in the match?
3. What, in your opinion, can be done to prevent that from happening again?
4. Do you know of similar cases in football history?

C/ Goal Line Technology

Useful vocabulary before you read:

1. trial
 2. count
 3. questionable
 4. spinning
 5. represent
 6. approval
 7. impartial
 8. reassured
 9. disallow
 10. heart-wrenching
 11. intersect
 12. scrutinized
-
- a. to take part in a competition for a country or club
 - b. turning around and around very quickly
 - c. to be accepted or allowed
 - d. to refuse sth because of the rules
 - e. fair and unbiased (not supporting one side or the other)
 - f. watched very closely
 - g. uncertain, not sure
 - h. making people very sad
 - i. a positive response from an official – a “yes”
 - j. to test sth in action
 - k. when two areas cross each other
 - l. to be made to feel more confident

The International Football Association Board has approved the use of goal line technology.



During the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, Chelsea midfielder Frank Lampard represented his country playing in the English squad in a match against Germany. England were 2-1 down in the first half when Lampard had a shot on goal that bounced off the crossbar and over the line. The ball was spinning so fast that it bounced off the pitch and back out of the goal. For a goal to count, the whole ball must be over the line. For millions of fans watching the replay on TV, it was clear that this had happened, but for the referee and assistant referee it wasn't. Frank Lampard and millions of English fans watched in dismay as the goal was disallowed and England were still behind. As a result of that match, they went out of the championship.

There have been many other examples of times when TV footage seems to show that the ball crossed the line and a goal wasn't awarded. In the past, football officials argued that this is an aspect of the game that relies on the judgment of referees. Referees are only human, but if they are impartial, these mistakes will even themselves out. Sometimes they will hurt a team and sometimes they will help a team. Almost to prove that point, during the Euro 2012 championship, Ukrainian striker Marko Devic burst through the England defense and struck the ball against the crossbar. Again, it bounced downwards and into the goal. John Terry kicked the ball clear, but not before many believed that the ball had crossed the line. The goal was not allowed and Ukraine were out.

Modern TV cameras are now so fast and clear that the viewers at home get a better view of the goal line than the referees have on the pitch. This means that during important matches the referees' decisions are scrutinized by millions of fans. In the past, when the technology was not so clear, it was easier for fans to accept questionable decisions. However, modern technology means that fans have to experience every referee decision in heart wrenching slow motion.

On the 5th of July, the International Football Association Board reviewed the arguments and gave its approval to the use of a special type of camera called Hawk-eye. This is actually a system of cameras that watch the goal and can detect whether or not the ball has crossed the line. The Premier League has been involved in the development of this technology since 2006, when it helped trial the system at Fulham's Craven Cottage and at Reading.

The system had its first trial in competition earlier this year at Southampton's St Mary's Stadium during the Hampshire Senior Cup final between AFC Totton and Eastleigh FC.

A second system that may be employed in Premier League matches in the future is called GoalRef. This system uses magnets around the goal line and in the ball. When the magnetic fields intersect, a message is sent to the referee. GoalRef has been tested in the Danish SuperLiga.

This announcement will be welcome news to many supporters who have been calling for goal-line technology. The Premier League issued a statement declaring:

"The Premier League has been a long-term advocate of goal-line technology".

FIFA secretary general Jerome Valcke announced that these technologies will be used at the 2012 FIFA Club World Cup in December. Chelsea will be among the teams competing because they won the UEFA Champions League. Frank Lampard will be reassured to know that if his shots cross the line, Hawk-eye and GoalRef will be there to help the referee make the right decision.

True or false?

1. Chelsea's Frank Lampard scored a goal against Germany in the 2010 World Cup.
2. For a goal to be allowed, the whole ball has to cross the goal line.
3. Marko Devic scored a goal against England in the Euro 2012 championship.
4. The International Football Association Board has refused to allow the use of technology to help referees.
5. The Premier League helped develop this technology.
6. The first trial of the technology during a competitive match was at Fulham.
7. The technology will be used at the 2012 FIFA World Club Cup.